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United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 101st CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 135 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 1989 No. 75

CDPM
DOCUMENTAÇÃO

Senate

HUMAN RIGHTS IN EAST TIMOR

● Mr. DURENBERGER. Mr. President, tomorrow, Indonesia's President Suharto will meet with President Bush here in Washington. Indonesia is a nation which shares our interest in regional security and economic development in Southeast Asia. President Suharto has helped shape the Association of Southeast Asian Nations into one of the most effective regional organizations. Most recently, Indonesia played a vital role in bringing together the major parties in the Combodian conflict. Despite such positive achievements, however, there are some troubling issues. Tomorrow's meeting will also be an excellent opportunity for the Bush administration to raise, at the highest level, the issue of the situation in the former Portuguese colony of East Timor, which was occupied and annexed by Indonesia in 1975.

Last October, I led a group of 47 of our Senate colleagues in sending a letter, co-authored by Senator LEVIN, to then-Secretary of States Shultz, which outlined our concerns about human rights violations, the restrictions on international observation groups and armed conflict in East Timor. On that occasion, as on previous occasions, we noted that many thousands of people—perhaps 150,000, or more than one-fifth of the original population—have perished in East Timor since 1975, and that steps should be taken to ensure that further human suffering is averted.

Since I sent that letter, reports that human rights violations are being carried out in East Timor by the Indonesian military have come to light. An account of the current conditions was reported in the New York Times earlier this year. Msgr. Carlos Belo, the Roman Catholic Bishop of East Timor was quoted as saying recent reports of improvement in the human rights situation in East Timor were false. The article noted that Bishop Belo's observations were "his strongest statement against the Indonesian authorities since he was appointed head of the church in East Timor in 1983 • • • [in which Belo accused the authorities of barbarism]." Bishop Belo said interrogations "accompanied by blows, kickings and beatings" were "the norm in East Timor." Subsequent communications by Bishop Belo speak of killings, arbitrary arrests, and abuse of women by Indonesian soldiers. Monsignor Belo laid out specific concerns about the human rights situation in a letter to the Indonesian Papal Nuncio on February 16, 1989.

On February 6, 1989, Monsignor Belo sent a letter to U.N. Secretary General Perez de Cueller, asking for the United Nation's assistance in securing self-determination for East Timor. Belo called for a United Nation's sponsored plebiscite as a first step in the decolonization of East Timor.

When recently asked about Monsignor Belo's letter by Indonesian journalists, the Indonesian Minister for Politics and Security Affairs, Admiral Sudomo, said that if such a letter existed, "we have to question how much patriotism the bishop has" and "it is incorrect to report something to a foreigner." Such remarks, coming from a top-ranking security official, at least imply a threat to Monsignor Belo. And given the history of the Timor situation—the annexation by Indonesia, brutal human rights violations and the large scale loss of life—some observers would wonder whether or not Bishop Belo is obligated to agree to the standard of patriotism set by Indonesian security officials. Nonetheless, to request a free and fair election is no crime and this should not be met with threats, implicit or explicit.

I firmly believe that the United States should support the continuation and expansion of the small international humanitarian presence in East Timor, so that the people of the island may receive the greatest amount of international observation and relief possible. I also advocate the reduction of restrictions on movement in and out of the territory, and respect for human rights. Finally, Monsignor Belo's request for a democratic solution to the tragic situation in East Timor cannot be ignored.

On January 1, 1989, President Suharto declared East Timor an open territory. The Indonesian administrator of the island, Governor Carrascalao, has also voiced his support for increased international access to East Timor. The Indonesian Government has made right choice—now these promises need to be followed up with deeds allowing unrestricted access to humanitarian and human rights organizations.

No one doubts President Bush's commitment to world human rights. I am confident that he will express our shared concern about the conditions in East Timor to President Suharto.

Mr. President, I ask that the aforementioned article from the New York Times, our October 1988 letter to then Secretary of State Shultz and two letters from Bishop Belo be printed in the RECORD.

[From the New York Times, Jan. 22, 1989]

BISHOP SAYS INDONESIA TORTURES IN EAST TIMOR

LISBON, Jan. 21.—The Roman Catholic Bishop of East Timor, saying claims that human rights abuses had ended were "lying propaganda," has accused the Indonesian Government of continuing to practice torture in the region.

In his strongest statement against the Indonesian authorities since he was appointed head of the church in East Timor in 1983, the Bishop, Msgr. Carlos Filipe Belo, accused the authorities in Jakarta of barbarism.

East Timor, a former Portuguese colony, was invaded by Indonesia in 1975. The United Nations still recognizes Portuguese administration, but the United States recognizes Indonesian sovereignty.

The invasion produced accusations of widespread brutality. Human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and the Catholic Institute of International Relations, have said in the years since that as many as 200,000 of the 650,000 people may have died as a direct result of the invasion and the suppression of armed resistance, which has continued intermittently.

Monsignor Belo's statement followed a roundup of East Timorese when President Suharto of Indonesia visited the region in November. Jakarta-based journalists reported that about 3,000 East Timorese had been arrested.

Monsignor Belo said that arrests had been made in Dili, the capital, and the towns of Baucau, Lospalos and Viqueque, and that although most people had been freed, some were still detained.

East Timorese exiles in Portugal said seven or eight were still in prison.

In his statement, which he ordered to be read in churches throughout East Timor, the Bishop said criminal interrogations "accompanied by blows, kickings and beatings" were "the norm in Timor."

"We disagree with this barbaric system and condemn the lying propaganda according to which abuses of human rights do not exist in East Timor," the statement said.

The document was dated Dec. 5 but only now reached Lisbon, having been carried out of the territory by church officials. Exiles and human rights organizations say postal services and telephone communications have been censored since 1975.

Monsignor Belo has been criticized by the East Timorese liberation movement, known by its Portuguese acronym, Fretilin, and by young, radical Catholics, who regard him as pro-Indonesian, largely because of the circumstances of his appointment. He replaced the popular Martinho Lopes da Costa, who was forced to retire in 1983 after Indonesia complained to the Vatican of his nationalistic sermons.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, October 28, 1988.

Hon. GEORGE SHULTZ,
Secretary of State, Department of State, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: For a number of years members of the United States Senate have been concerned about the conditions in the former Portuguese colony of East Timor, which was invaded and forcibly annexed by Indonesia in 1975. We are aware of the fact that you have raised human rights issues in East Timor with Indonesian officials over the past six years. We applaud your willingness to address these concerns with one of our most valuable friends in Southeast Asia.

We are aware that certain improvements have taken place in East Timor in recent years. However, there is little doubt that armed conflict continues in the territory. Partly because of this armed conflict and the tight control exercised by the Indonesian armed forces over the civilian population, agricultural activity is impeded, resulting in shortages of food in some areas of East Timor. The memory of the disastrous war-induced famine which killed thousands of Timorese in 1978-80 makes us particularly concerned about the current situation. We believe the continuing military conflict in the territory and any renewed shortages of food and medical supplies warrant the careful attention of the United States.

We wish to insure that conditions do not deteriorate as a result of international inattention or increased levels of Indonesian military action. Therefore, international humanitarian organizations should be allowed to maintain and, where necessary, expand their operations to help provide relief and protection to the civilian population throughout East Timor. Such relief and protection should be permitted to extend to any Timorese political detainees still being held within East Timor or elsewhere.

Recent reports about the human rights situation in East Timor are also of great concern to us. The transfer of political prisoners to Jakarta makes family visitation nearly impossible, while released detainees are reportedly unable to return to their place of origin in East Timor. We are informed that torture during interrogation of Timorese continues, especially in outlying areas. Freedom of expression for citizens of East Timor, including most Roman Catholic clergy, continues to be virtually non-existent. Monitoring human rights conditions in East Timor is difficult because human rights organizations have been denied access. We strongly believe that regular visits to East Timor by respected human rights organizations would help shed light on conditions inside East Timor, and make

the Indonesian government more accountable for its administration of the territory.

In the past some of us have called for a peaceful resolution of the East Timor conflict that recognizes the interests of all parties. In recent months, there have been signs in various parts of the world that seemingly intractable conflicts need not remain so indefinitely. We believe that the United States could help bring the parties involved in the East Timor conflict to the negotiating table to begin a process that could end this 13-year tragedy. We hope that the United States, whether directly or indirectly, will agree to play such a role in the interests of peace and stability in that part of the world.

We fully recognize the difficulty of securing a peaceful and equitable settlement in East Timor. We remain aware of the value of the friendly relationship between the governments of Indonesia and the United States based on sound strategic and political considerations. But it is our belief that this relationship can only be strengthened by Indonesia's pursuit of a just and lasting solution to the East Timor tragedy. A significant step in that direction could be accomplished by actions addressing the human rights issues raised in this letter.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Carl M. Levin, Edward M. Kennedy, Dave Durenberger, Rudy Boschwitz, Claiborne Pell, Daniel P. Moynihan, Alan J. Dixon, Tom Harkin, Bill Bradley, Spark M. Matsunaga, John Kerry, Dennis DeConcini, Richard G. Lugar, Mark O. Hatfield, Charles E. Grassley, Robert T. Stafford, John Heinz, Alfonse D'Amato, George J. Mitchell, Thomas Daschle, Howard M. Metzenbaum, Paul S. Sarbanes, Christopher J. Dodd, Timothy E. Wirth, Alan Cranston, Bob Graham, Kent Conrad, Patrick J. Leahy, John H. Chafee, Quentin N. Burdick, Barbara Mikulski, William Proxmire, Brock Adams, Dale Bumpers, Don Riegle, John D. Rockefeller, Frank H. Murkowski, Frank R. Lautenberg, Pete Wilson, Joseph R. Biden, Jr., David Pryor, Terry Sanford, Nancy Kassebaum, Arlen Specter, Lowell P. Weicker, Jr., Paul Simon, Albert Gore, Jr.

DILI, *February 6, 1989.*

His Excellency SR. DR. JAVIER PÉREZ DE CUELLAR,
Secretary General of the United Nations,
New York, USA.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: First allow me to give you my sincere and respectful greetings.

I am taking the liberty of writing to your Excellency to draw to your attention the fact that the process of decolonisation of Portuguese Timor has still not been resolved by the United Nations, and it is important that this should not be forgotten. For our part, we, the people of Timor, think that we must be consulted on the future of our land. That is why I am writing, as a leader of the Catholic Church, and as a citizen of Timor, to ask you, as Secretary General, to start in Timor the most normal and democratic process of decolonisation, i.e. the holding of a referendum. The people of Timor must be allowed to express their views on their future through a plebiscite. Hitherto the people have not been consulted. Others speak in the name of the people. Indonesia says that the people of Timor Timur (East Timor: trans) have already chosen integration, but the people of Timor themselves have never said this. Portugal wants to let time solve the problem. And we continue to die as a people and a nation.

You are a democrat and a friend of human rights. Therefore let your excellency demonstrate with facts your respect for the spirit and letter of the United Nations charter, which grants to all the peoples of this plant the right to choose their own destiny freely, consciously and responsibly. Your excellency, there is no more democratic means of ascertaining the supreme desire of the Timorese people than the holding of a referendum promoted by the United Nations for the people of Timor.

Sr. Pérez de Cuellar, I thank you for all your sympathy with the people of Timor and conclude by expressing once again my best wishes.

With admiration and respect, I remain

DOM CARLOS FILIPE XIMENES BELO SDB,
Titular Bishop of Lorium,
Apostolic Administrator of Dili.

DILI, *February 16, 1989.*

His Excellency The APOSTOLIC NUNCIO,
Apostolic Nunciature,
Jakarta.

EXCELLENCY: My sincere and respectful greetings.

I am responding to your letter of February 1, 1989, No. 2264/89 in which you ask me for an exhaustive report on the Yayasan Santo Antonio. I should mention that in my pastoral letter (or note) of December 5 I have already explained this Yayasan a bit. In the first place, the so-called Yayasan Santo Antonio is not a real Yayasan, because in order to be a Yayasan (according to its meaning in Bahasa) it would have to have a recognized organizational structure with a managing board (BaDAN Pengurua) and it would have to have statutes (Anggara dasar) that were approved by a court. In this case this (yayasan) is a secret organization and its activities are secret. Its founder is a man called Anantas do Carmo, born in Oe-Cussi, a teacher in the catholic school in Balide-Dili. According to what he says, he disappeared when he was 7 years of age and that he reappeared when he was 9 years old. From that time on he does not suffer any illnesses or ever gets hurt. His body has a special power and is not susceptible to be penetrated by bullets. He began to gather sympathizers among the "guru," the "pelajar" and some "pogawal" to defend the Catholic religion against Islam and Protestantism. That is why he has a special devotion to Santo Antonio, they say the third part of the rosary in the oratories and light candles and they pray to obtain cures for sick people. As a sign of recognition among the members, they mark their skin, either the palm of the hand or the arm, with a tatoo in the form of a crucifix. This practice has spread throughout the schools from Dili to Lospalos. This organization began its activities in 1984.

At the same time another organization emerged called the "SECRET PARTY" which has more of a political contents and which gathered Timorese who are discontent with the present situation (Indonesian occupation). Among the leaders Afonso Pinto stands out who is also known by the name of LAPAIK. Some members were Timorese military men, policemen, civil servants and students. The goal of this organization, according to the words of Lapaik himself, is to fight "corruption". This organization was discovered at the end of 1987 and in 1988 Lafaik was sent to Viqueque to fight the guerrillas of the Frente. More or less in 1988 these two organizations merged and had as their goal to kill President Suharto when he would come to visit East Timor. Because of a misunderstanding among the members in Wutalari and because of some (contentious) questions, there were mutual denunciations and the organization was discovered by the military. A wave of imprisonments and interrogatories followed (men, women and students). There were abuses against women and girls. There were beatings and kicking of men. These scenes provoked a reaction among the people and that is why the Church took a position in the PASTORAL NOTE of December 5, 1988. At this moment the situation has calmed down. Some of the leaders continue to be in prison. Will they be put before a court? I do not know.

We still do not know if the Yayasan was founded only by Timorese or if there are occult forces behind it. The worst of it all was that all this carnival of imprisonments and interrogatories was carried out by some officers who wanted to receive awards from Suharto!

I.—The fact that Indonesia invaded and occupied East Timor militarily, not even allowing the Timorese people to express their feelings, is in itself already a violation of human rights against the Charter of the United Nations.

II.—It is forbidden to talk about politics, it is forbidden to form associations, to hold meetings and to circulate at night. These are the facts of every day life. It is forbidden to talk about independence, about autonomy and to talk about a referendum. Everybody is forced to talk about PANCASILA and PEMBAGUNAN. Regarding religion, there is no right to be non-religious, atheist or animist. Everybody has to choose a religion. Points I and II are a lot more grave than the ordinary abuses such as:

III. In Dili-Laclutar members of battallion 726 killed

1. Carlos Mendes da Silva, 22 years old, assassinated on October 31, 1988 with 18 bullets in his body;

2. Luis da Cruz, 20 years old, with 18 bullets in his body; they were killed in public in front of 15 people (I do have the names).

Civilians who were beaten:

1. Araujo Fernandes-Desa Ahio-Dilo
2. Agostinho Lo'o-Desa Ahio-Dilo
3. Francisco Parada Martins-Desa Ahio-Dilo
4. Luis Ximenes-Desa Ahio-Dilo
5. Loi 'Ouela-ficoi (his head was split open)
6. Alarico Martins-Desa Ahio
7. Moises Ximenes-Desa Ahio

On November 5, 1988 the commander of the sector ordered Mr. Afonso Lafaik to tell the people that assassinations were carried out by Fretilin. On November 7 the commander of the sector and the authorities in Viqueque made a statement to the population in Lacluta saying that the acts committed were acts of Fretilin. (A PUBLIC LIE OF THE AUTHORITIES, SOME OF WHICH ARE CATHOLIC, APOSTOLIC AND ROMAN).

IV. There were more killings by the military in Ossu (4 people), Laclutas (5 people), Viqueque (2 people), Gariwai-Baucau (2 people) Luro (1 person). It would be a long-drawn-out story of assassinations in the name of Keamanan.

V. There are threats and psychological pressure on the civil servants in order to avoid that they publicise the various assassinations, if they do not obey they lose their jobs, the NIP and will be killed themselves. After all, we have lived in this since 1976 . . .

Since 1983, year in which I was nominated to be the Apostolic Administrator, we have every year always seen these same abuses. We already have talked and continue to talk with the authorities, but the result is always the same. It is the people who suffer. That is why it is urgent to CARRY OUT A REFERENDUM in order to ask the people of East Timor if they accept integration.

In Timor we live under the psychological pressure of the Dictatorship. A last piece of news: The military are already training and paying former prisoners of the Yayasan Santo Antonio to have them spy on the priests in the parishes. With all this one can ask: Since when do violations of human rights not exist in East Timor?

With sentiments of consideration and admiration.

CARLOS FILIPE XIMENES BELO,
SDB,
Titular Bishop of Lorium,
Apostolic Administrator of Dili.●